

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ROME 05913 311719Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 BIB-01 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
MCT-01 SY-05 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 HA-05 SSO-00 /085 W
-----062118 010719Z /14

R 311540Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1733
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
DIA
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
SHAPEUSNR
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
USDOCOSOUTH
USMISSION USNATO
AFOSI DIST 65 ROME IT/IVOA
HG AFOSI WASHDC/IVOAD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ROME 5913

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJ: MORO KIDNAPPING--RESISTANCE GROWS TO THE IDEA OF AN EXCHANGE

REF: ROME 5809

1. THE ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST LETTER FROM CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC
PARTY (DC) PRESIDENT MORO, WITH ITS REFERENCE TO PRISONER EX-
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ROME 05913 311719Z

CHANGES IN OTHER AREAS OF THE WORLD, STIMULATED A DAY OF DE-
BATE WITHIN POLITICAL CIRCLES ON THE POSITION WHICH SHOULD BE
ASSUMED IN THE EVENT THAT THE BRIGATE ROSSE (BR) FORMALLY
PRESENT A PROPOSAL TO EXCHANGE MORO FOR SOME OF THEIR ASSOCIATES
CURRENTLY HELD IN ITALIAN PRISONS. VIRTUALLY ALL THE MAJOR POLITICAL
FORCES HAVE NOW EXPRESSED THEMSELVES AS OPPOSED TO THE IDEA OF
NEGOTIATING AN EXCHANGE WITH THE BR.

2. AS THE PARTY MOST DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE EVENTS, THE RESPONSE OF THE DC WAS THE ONE MOST EAGERLY AWAITED. IT HAS COME IN THE FORM OF A STATEMENT APPEARING IN THE MARCH 31 ISSUE OF THE PARTY DAILY IL POPOLO AND IS THE RESULT OF A ROUND OF MEETINGS ON MARCH 30 INVOLVING THE DC LEADERSHIP. FIRMLY REJECTING THE IDEA OF AN EXCHANGE, THE DC STATEMENT SAYS QUOTE WE BELIEVE IT IS NECESSARY TO REITERATE WITH CONSIDERED CONVICTION THAT IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO ACCEPT THE BLACKMAIL RAISED BY THE BRIGATE ROSSE. END QUOTE. THE STATEMENT GOES ON TO SAY QUOTE THE DC IS CERTAIN THAT THE NATION IS FULLY AWARE OF THE DELICATE NATURE OF THE HOUR, OF THE TREMENDOUS TEST TO WHICH ON. MORO IS BEING PUT, AND OF THE NECESSITY TO PRESERVE, WITH THE MORAL TENSION OF GREAT MOMENTS, SOCIETY ITSELF. END QUOTE.

3. FOLLOWING A THREE-HOUR MEETING OF ITS SECRETARIAT, THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY TOOK AN EQUALLY STRONG POSITION AGAINST THE IDEA OF AN EXCHANGE. IN AN UNSIGNED, LEAD EDITORIAL APPEARING IN L'UNITA MARCH 31,

WHICH IS OBVIOUSLY ADDRESSED TO THE DC LEADERSHIP, THE PCI NOTES THAT QUOTE WE ARE CERTAIN THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND THE DC ITSELF, EVEN IF IN THE TORMENT OF A VERY HUMAN DRAMA THAT WE WELL UNDERSTAND, WILL REJECT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ROME 05913 311719Z

THE SUICIDAL LOGIC INTO WHICH THE CRIMINALS WOULD WISH TO PROVOKE THEM AND WILL DEMONSTRATE IN THE NECESSARY WAY THEIR SENSE OF STATE. END QUOTE. THE L'UNITA EDITORIAL GOES ON TO STATE THAT QUOTE A DEMOCRATIC STATE CANNOT MAKE CONCESSIONS TO TERRORISM. WOE IF IT IS DONE. TO CONCEDE ON THIS GROUND WOULD ONLY OPEN THE PATH TO A CRESCENDO OF NEW BLACKMAIL AND TO NEW CONCESSIONS....END QUOTE.

4. OPPOSITION TO THE IDEA OF AN EXCHANGE ALSO HAS COME FROM SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC, LIBERAL, DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL AND NEO-FASCIST PARTIES. THE SOCIALISTS, WHO ARE IN THE MIDST OF THEIR NATIONAL CONGRESS, AND THE REPUBLICANS TOOK MORE CAUTIOUS POSITIONS, PLACING AN EMPHASIS ON THE STEPS WHICH NEED TO BE TAKEN NOW TO DEAL WITH THE EXISTING SITUATION.

5. FROM A SOURCE WITH TIES TO THE MORO FAMILY, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE FAMILY ITSELF IS OPPOSED TO THE IDEA OF AN EXCHANGE. THE FAMILY BASES ITS DECISION ON THE FACT THAT THEY DO NOT BELIEVE MORO, HIMSELF, WOULD WANT TO BE EXCHANGED UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WOULD BE HUMILIA HUMILIATING TO HIM AND TO THE STATE.

6. THE INITIAL REACTION OF THE VATICAN WITH RESPECT TO THE REFERENCE IN MORO'S LETTER THAT "A STEP BY THE HOLY SEE" COULD BE HELPFUL IN THE EPISODE (REFTEL), HAS BEEN GUARDED. THE VATICAN SPOKESMAN TOLD REPORTERS THAT "TOO MUCH ATTENTION" HAD ALREADY BEEN GIVEN TO THE CAPTORS' MESSAGES, AND WHILE EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THE HOLY SEE NEVER REFRAINS FROM TAKING "HUMANITARIAN ACTIONS," IT IS APPROPRIATE IN THIS CASE TO WAIT FOR CLARIFICATION OF MAY POINTS IN THE MORO LETTER AND THE RELATED MESSAGES.

7. THIS REACTION IS CONSISTENT WITH THE POSITION THE VATICAN HAS ASSUMED IN THE ENTIRE EPISODE. FOR WHILE THE VATICAN (AND THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 ROME 05913 311719Z

POPE PERSONALLY) HAVE VOICED THEIR CONCERN FOR MORO'S SAFETY, THE VATICAN COMMUNICATION ORGANS HAVE STRESSED THE NECESSITY FOR THE REINFORCEMENT OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE, APPLAUDED DEMONSTRATIONS OF NATIONAL UNITY AND SUPPORTED THE COUNTERTERRORIST EFFORTS. THE VATICAN ORGANS HAVE ALSO CRITICIZED THE EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY GIVEN TO THE MESSAGES OF THE CAPTORS AND PARTICULARLY WARNED THE PRESS TO BE ATTENTIVE TO THE TERMINOLOGY IT USES TO DESCRIBE TERRORIST ACTIONS BECAUSE TO SPEAK OF A "TRIAL" FOR MORO EVEN IN QUOTATION MARKS IS "ALREADY A STEP" IN ACCEPTING THE LOGIC OF THE TERRORISTS.

8. COMMENT: THE VATICAN IS NOT LIKELY TO TAKE ANY ACTIVE ROLE UNLESS ASKED BY THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. GARDNER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING, PRISONER EXCHANGE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ROME05913
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780141-0971
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978033/aaaaacad.tel
Line Count: 150
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 500138be-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 ROME 5809
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3216653
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MORO KIDNAPPING--RESISTANCE GROWS TO THE IDEA OF AN EXCHANGE
TAGS: PINT, IT, (MORO, ALDO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/500138be-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014